

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
INFO USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 138366

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, IZ, IR

SUBJECT: IRAQ-SOVIET RELATIONS

REF: TEHRAN 5074

1. CURRENT STRAINS IN IRAQI-SOVIET RELATIONS ARE REAL.
CONTRIBUTING FACTORS INCLUDE:

-- IRAQI CONCERN FOR THE SECURITY OF THE REGIME IN THE FACE
OF THE RECENT COUP IN AFGHANISTAN AND CIVIL UNREST IN IRAN;

-- CONTINUED PENETRATION OF THE MILITARY AND GOVERNMENT BY
THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF IRAQ;

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-- THE HORN OF AFRICA, WHICH PRESENTS A CONFLICT BETWEEN
IRAQI SUPPORT FOR LIBERATION MOVEMENTS AND THE STRATEGIC
ALLIANCE WITH THE SOVIETS; AND

-- GENERAL DISAGREEMENT ON ARAB-ISRAELI ISSUES.

2. IN ORDER TO PRESSURE THE SOVIETS ON THE HORN OF AFRICA,

BAGHDAD RECENTLY;

-- MADE PUBLIC STANDING DISAGREEMENT WITH CUBANS AND SOVIETS OVER THE HORN VIA AN ARTICLE IN A PARIS NEWSPAPER JUST BEFORE RECENT FRENCH-AFRICAN MEETINGS;

-- HAD SADDAM HUSSEIN CALL IN SOVIET AMBASSADOR FOR A DISCUSSION OF THE IRAQI POSITION ON THE HORN;

-- LEAKED CAREFULLY WORDED STATEMENT TO KUWAITI PRESS DRAWING ON HUSSEIN-SOVIET AMBASSADOR TALK WHICH HINTED AT A BREAK IN RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS IF IT IS PROVEN THAT THE SOVIETS GAVE MILITARY SUPPORT TO ETHIOPIA FOR USE AGAINST THE ERITREANS.

THE IRAQIS CLIMAXED THEIR CAMPAIGN BY APPARENTLY EXECUTING LOW-RANKING COMMUNISTS WHO HAD INFILTRATED THE ARMY AND GOVERNMENT.

3. WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE, HOWEVER, THAT BAGHDAD IS WILLING TO RISK ITS STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SOVIETS. THE REGIME MAY EVEN FEEL OBLIGATED TO REASSERT POSITIONS CONGENIAL TO THE SOVIETS ON ISSUES NOT CENTRAL TO IRAQI SECURITY INTERESTS.

4. WHEN YOU DISCUSS THE ABOVE POINTS WITH THE SHAH OR HIS CONFIDENTIAL

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ADVISERS, YOU MIGHT NOTE RECENT IRAQI-IRANIAN VISITS, INCLUDING THAT OF THE IRAQI AIR FORCE COMMANDER, AND ASK THE IRANIANS WHAT THE IRAQIS SAY ABOUT BAGHDAD'S RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS. VANCE

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